

DISCUSSION

Lands in Conservation Ownership

Table 1 lists the approximate percentage of conservation ownership (as calculated from GIS mapping) of the 31 standard sites, the two large managed areas, and the four clusters of sites described in the inventory. Fortunately, from the conservation perspective, Scotland County contains a considerable acreage in public conservation lands. The county's portion of the Sandhills Game Land, protected by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission (hereafter, NCWRC), comprises 22,546 acres, or 11% of all of the land in Scotland County. And, the 4,492 acres of U.S. Department of Defense's Camp Mackall in the county, though not all of which contains natural vegetation, comprises 2.2% of the county's acres. Thus, these two managed areas comprise 13.2% of the total land area of the county. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service holds small acreages of conservation easements at sites along Juniper Creek and Johns Pond/Leith Creek.

Much of the Lumber River has been designated a National Wild and Scenic River and also a State Natural and Scenic River. These designations cover the river from SR 1412 (Turnpike Road) down to the Robeson County line, a total of 22 river miles, as well as much additional river mileage farther downstream. These designations serve to protect the river's flow by precluding the construction of dams and reservoirs; however, the designations do not affect water quality matters such as discharges into the river.

Away from the Sandhills Game Land and Camp Mackall in the north, there is little conservation land in Scotland County. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation owns 555 acres along the Lumber River north of Wagram as the Chalk Banks section of Lumber River State Park; it also owns a small tract along the river north of the Laurinburg-Maxton Airport as part of that state park. The N.C. Department of Transportation owns roughly 4.5 acres of mitigation land at the Wagram Borrow Pit Amphibian Site. (Certain other areas of public land, such as the relatively large Laurinburg-Maxton Airport Authority land in the southeastern part of the county, are not included as conservation land by the NC NHP.)

Private conservation lands appear to be limited primarily to holdings of The Nature Conservancy (hereafter, TNC) and the N.C. Herpetological Society. TNC owns 235 acres at the McIntosh Bay Complex, which is 47% of the total acreage of the natural area, and also 10 acres (on the North Carolina side) at Stateline Prairie Bay (plus an additional 50 acres of the bay in South Carolina). The N.C. Herpetological Society owns 139 acres near the borrow pit as their Big Shoe Heel Creek Preserve.